again. This expectation was the more reason-

able because she maintained her more youth-

ful habits. But five years went by, ten,

fifteen, and still Sibyl Goldmore did not

change her name. And now there appeared

upon her most unmistakable signs of age; and

curiously enough, as her beauty more and

more decayed, she seemed more and more re-

solved to let all the world know what a

## BEAUTY'S SECRET

By ALAN MUIR.

Author of 'Vanity Hardware,' "Golden Girls," Elc.

> CHAPTER VL A SURPRISE

"We have been examining, my dear Sophia. your mother's papers, and we are now in a position to let you know exactly how you stand I have waited before calling you down in order that I might be able to satisfy your mind in all particulars, and not merely need over documents to you which would deal in general terms without making the fat of the case clear. I think as your mother has made a very special communication to you about her affairs a communication which she wished her executor to read before showing it to you-I think I may now read her letter, and thus it will be she and not I who will tell you how you are left. Shall I read the letter, or will you read it for

tend it, please," Sophia replied, trembling Galdmore drew the candle closer to himadjusted his glasses on his nose and

My Dear Sophia-I have for a long time felt great anxiety about you and your future, when I shall be taken from you. For Caroline and Siby! I am not concerned; they are hannily married, and will never want either wealth or counsel. With you the case is very different. You must be aware that your course in life has not I een such as I approved of I regretted, and I shall always regret, that you did not marry when you had a favorable opportunity, and you know well that, in acting as you did, you cast aside all my precepts, and, indeed, disappointed all my hopes. But I am bound to say you never forgot yourself, and your behavior was as mild and daughterly as postible under the circumstances; and I cannot but tell you that your affection for me at that time touched nie deeply, although I was angry. You gave me the idea of a girl who, though acting from a mistaken principle, was doing it in a highminded way. And since then, every day, I have had fre h tokens of your love and care. "You three girls will have at my death a thousand pounds apiece. The whole of my remaining income goes back to the family of my first husband. I hoped to have seen you

married and settled before I died; but, as this was not to be, I could not think of your being left in so mis rable a condition. For this reason, while my income was still very large, t resolved, without telling any one, to reduce my expenditure, and lay up a li tle money for you. I have already accumulated rather more than eight thousand pounds, and before I die this sum will no doubt be increased. You will be my residuary legatee, and at my death the sum I have saved will be yours absolutely. I must charge you to be cautious with it. Submit yourself implicitly to the guidance of our good Archihald; and, as you love my memory, and remember the sacrifice I have made, you must not, in any freak of affection, let the fertune slip away. It is meant for your comfort. You will ill repay me if you allow any other

person to squander it. 'You have chosen your way in life; and, although it is not mine, I hope you will be happy. Of course I have no right to force my views on you. You have got to live your own life, and to get enjoyment in your own way. The great thing in life is by some means to get enjoyment out of it, which I sincerely hope you may do. Try, anyway, to be a credit to your mother. Remember, whatever else you do, always dress handsomely and keep up appearances, and think sometimes of your old worldly mother, "'BARBARA TEMPLE.'"

Goldmore laid the letter on the table, and then, with his most imposing air, took up another paper, on which were some columns of figures, set out with great care. He readjusted his glasses, and began afresh:

"The property you receive in this way," he said, "amounts to about twelve thousand pounds, and the manner in which it is invested is most satisfactory. I should like you to glance over this-"

"O, Archibald, not just yet," Sophia said, in great agitation. "To-morrow-another time will do. I feel a little upset. Will you give me mamma's letter, and then excuse me for a while! I don't think I can speak very much With an agitated bow to the man of law

she got out of the room. "Miss Temple is a little moved," the solicitor remarked. "By no means unnatural." "She is a tender-hearted girl,", Goldmore said, adding, in his testimonial style: "I have

a high opinion of her." And Sophia hurried away, not to her lover, but to her mother's room. There she cast herself on Mrs. Temple's bed, and poured out mingled tears of gratitude, grief and joy, such as I hope, reader, may bedew your memory some day. The little worldly mother, who seemed-and who, in a way, was-so selfish, how kindly she had acted at the last! Sophia thought of her frivolity, her obstinate refusal to make any preparation for death, her absorbed spirit of worldliness; and then

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this kind deed coming up like a flower out of her very grave! She was a tender-hearted girl, as Goldmore said; but, perhaps, most of us, one time or another, have felt something akin to the feeling which filled her breast, as, through her tears, she called out although there was none to hear: "Mamma, mamma! Oh, if I could only tell

you-if I could only have you for ten minutes

## CHAPTER VII.

LADY BEAUTY'S JOY TURNS INTO FROLIC Yes, but tear; like those-albeit their grief is deep and pure - are ready to sparkle when the next gleam of sunshine comes. Sophia awake next morning with a dancing heart. She did not see Percival again that night; but sent h m a little note asking him to come early to her the following morning. And no sconer was he in the room than she flew to him and kissed him, with pride and delight "What are you going to do?" she asked.

"Going back to Australia, as I told you," he answered. "But, Sophia, you are too good-far too good-to offer to wait for me. am not going to be a success in life, I am "O, I am going to earn my bread myself,

Sophia cried, clapping her hands. You keep yourself; I ll keep myself." "Earn your bread!" exclaimed Percival.

"How do you mean to do it?" "Give dancing lessons, dear," she answered,

And with a "tra, la, la" on her lips, she began to turn and whirl about the room, down and up, the picture of honest delight. And Percival looked on in wonder, which at every motion of her figure kept turning "Dancing lessons!" he exclaimed. "Where

will you get pupils?

"Here is my first," she retorts, taking him up as she goes by. "Now, sir-" Really, Sophia, what is all this for?" "For twelve thousand pounds, you clumsy

toy! There, you are on my toe!" "Twelve thousand pounds, Sophia?" "Twelve thousand pounds, Mr. Percival Brent. I am worth twelve thousand pounds!" Now she stops and looks him full in the face.

"By the way, can you tell me how Mrs. Lanigan is?" Percival turned very red at this amazing question; but there was no guiltiness in his face as he replied:

"How do you know Mrs. Lanigan?" "How do you know her?" Sophia asked anartly. "I know her through the newspaper. She was out driving with a friend of mine and got spilt. Somebody said it was the horses having had too much champagne-the

newspaper said that." Percival muttered something under his breath which sounded very like some bris." and emphatic remark about the newspaper. and caused Sophia to lift her finger.
"Please, not before me," she said. "No. colonial language before me. I am not Bes-

"I thought there was something up by what I heard in the hotel last night," Percival said with gravity and reflection. "Tell me, Sophia, have there been any stories going about here not to my credit?"

"Rather," she answered, now serious herself. "Don't mind them." "Let me tell you the whole truth about that affair," he said. "I was driving with Mrs. Lanigan. The fact was I was one of a large party in the country that day, and the carriage which was to take Mrs. Lanigan back to the theatre had an accident, and the friend at whose house she was asked me to drive her in his gig, and I did, and we came to grief. I believe, Sophia, I had too much champagne, and that is the truth of it. We had rather too merry an afternoon meal. I drank too much wine, I confess." "Naughty boy! But tell me-did you at next to Mrs. Lanigan at lunch?

"No; at the far end of the table." "There," Sophia said twice over, putting a kiss between the two words—"there, I forgive you the champagne!"

She forgave him; but the hot fellow would not so easily forgive the slanderous folk who had made free with his name. And if I were to tell how he searched the slander out, and faced Mrs. Hands, and faced John Done, to whom she referred him, and how John Done turned very pale, and declared that Mrs. Hands had taken up in earnest what he had said in jest, and how to exculpate himself John Done made all his family quarrel for-ever with Mrs. Hands, and how Mrs. Hands by the transaction lost fifty dinners and about one hundred lunches annually for the remainder of her life-all this, if I were to tell, would fill more pages than I can compute in a moment, and time and space press, and 1 must and shall soon make an end. So we go back to Sophia and her Percival.

He will not consent to marry her as a poor man. He will go back to Australia and make his fortune. Note, reader, how she

"Oh, very well," cries she, tossing her head angrily. "Of course I can't say Will you marry me? three times running. You must do as you please." She walks from him to the window, and

ooks out, quite in a pet. "You know what I mean," explains he. He has followed her. "You know quite well what I mean " "Well, if I do, then you need say no more

about it." And she turns her back on him. "I only say I can't marry you as a poor

"Very well; don't marry me, then." "But I don't want you to speak in that "And I don't want you to speak at all."

"Sophia, you need not be so ill-natured. She turns on him, making ready to tell fib he second, which this time was a sizable one, without any mistake. "O, I know what it is; you have some other

woman out in Australia whom you want to marry, and this is all pretense!" Australia!" Percival cried, aghast at the thought. "Another woman! Why, Sophia, look here!"

He sinks at her feet, and then he presses her handkerchief to his lips not her hand humbly signifying that anything about her is dear to him. And she, though not ill-pleased to see how artistically she has brought him to her feet, bites her lip, tosses her head, looks angry still. Then releasing her handkerchief from his grasp, and putting it to her

"I know this," she says. "If you really lolo-loved me, you would not let this miserable mo-mo-money stand in our way!" And quite overcome with grief, she plunges into her pocket handkerchief, and is lost to

He will have her out; she will not come. He will dry her eyes; she does not want to have them dried. He will make her stop crying; she cries all the more. At last he "Listen, Sophy; I will do anything you

please. I will make no trouble about anything. I will marry or not, just as you like, if you only will stop crying. I can't bear to see you cry; I can't, indeed "O, you dear old stupid!" she cries, unveil-

ing herself at the moment; and there she is, rosy, blushing, laughing, triumphant. She has carried her point and made a fool of him, and she tosses her handkerchief in his face, and flies from the room, killing him with a retreating eye as he tries to catch her in vain

My wish is that every reader of this tale should, at all convenient places, have the moral lessons of the passage pointed out. Here I will just remark, that if any reader is very much in love with a woman, and she wants him to do anything which he does not want to do, he may as well do it at once and

One other fragment of their courtship, of later date, let me give, just to show how Sophia wove her web around him. She is at the piano, and has been singing "In Questa Tomba" to him. They are alone in the little drawing room, and Percival says: "I am so fond of that melancholy music."

"Melancholy music! Will you have some Ripple and dash, her hands fly across the keys. Ripple and dash, the notes glance off

her finger tips in a kind of audible spray.

Then, with one look behind her at him, and a

face full of fun, she starts off: Laugh! if your heart beat light, dear boy; Alone and merry are we; For Love is the game, and I am the toy;

So laugh, if you like, at-me! Sing! if your heart beat light, dear boy-Like a lark o'er a sunlit lea; Let the first trill be Passion, the next be Joy And the end of the music-me!

Dance! if your heart beat light, dear boy; There's nobody here to see. You can be saucy-and I can be coy! Dance, with your arms about-me!

Just for one hour of heedless joy This shall our pastime be-Laughter and singing and dancing, dear boy And only yourself and--me!"

She ceased, and turned up a thorough flirting face, sparkling like a brook when the sunshine glances on it through moving just then, our grave Sophia, with her sericusness and her natural piety, and all the rest. Grave young women frolic at times, my uninstructed reader, and I would have you know it. But Percival, more prosaic than she-per-

haps more in love just then-looked at her, and his eyes grew moist with tenderness and delight as he gazed. "I don't laugh much, Sophy. I dance badly. I can't sing at all."

"An old crabbed, awkward thing!" she replied. "His face is crosspatch. His step is a halt. His notes were learned in a rookery. No, do what she will, she cannot make him laugh. He is too much in love, and his gaze makes her more serious, too. The twinkling lights in her face pass off. She begins to give him beam for beam, full of earnest affection. All the brook is running deeper now, and the lights fall on it steadily.

"But the awkward boy loves little Sophia more than all the world beside." "Does he, truly?" "More than all the world beside." How old

the words are! How new and fresh each lover can make them! "And will he go on loving-forever and forever and forever!" "Forever and forever and forever." "Then," Sophia cried, spreading out her

arms, "why are you standing over there, stupid thing? Don't keep me waiting any longer. Come and kiss me. CHAPTER VIII.

LADY RIVALS, WITH THE POOTLIGHTS BE-TWEEN THEM. Percival got his own way, after all, in the matter of marrying as a poor man. Fortune, Henry Fielding tells us somewhere, never does things by halves. Two months after Percival's uncle died, and it was found that, in spite of his wife's cajoling, he had remem-bered his nephew; and, though the bulk of

his property went to his stepsons, he left Percival the fifteen hundred a year which be had so long allowed to his father. So Percival did not marry as a poor man, after all, and the little mother, had she lived, might have confessed that sometimes love finds out the way to fortune too.

Wedding bells come ringing in as my story nears its end. Sophia Temple is the bride the sun shines on. It is a quiet marriage; but loving eyes are about her and upon her. Seven long years she has waited, and now the day has dawned that makes her happy. All is sunshine. The little wedding feast is full of pleasantry. Egerton Doolittle makes a speech, in which he assures the company that e always maintained, in the face of everybody, that Sophia would find some one to marry her some day. He did not exactly mean what he said, but that some one would turn up: for he had heard that there never is a Jack but there is a Jill-not that he meant to imply that Sophia was not most charming: quite the reverse; but still it requires foresight to say how any given thing will turn out, and he always said so, in si ite of everybody; and there the thing was that day, and nobody could gainsay it. And Goldmore hands Sophia solemnly into h. r carriage, and off they go for life and love, and the story is

They come back again and settle in the Beeches, which has lain vacant since Mrs. Temple gave it up. They began their married life with every promise of happiness and with the brief sunshine of this life warm and bright about them. May I relate one little Exactly a month after their return home

Egerton Doolittle came in one morning and asked to see Sophia privately; and when he was alone with her, and the door shut, he drew a long playbill out of his pocket. "Look here, Sophia," he says, in a voice of alarm, "look at this." The bill announces that in a neighboring

city there is to be for one night only a per-

formance of "The School for Scandal," with Mr. Lanigan as Charles Surface and Mrs. Lanigan as Lady Teazle. "I call it a serious thing for you, Sophia," Egerton says. "If you will take my advice as a relative, I should keep Percival in the

background. You will observe it is only for one night, and as a prudential matter I should keep Percival in the background." Does she? "Come here, sir," she says to her husband

after Egerton has gone. "Do you see this?" She shows him the playbill, and he looks a little foolish and conscious. "I want to see the Lanigan, Percy," she

says. "You must take a box for us both to see the Lanigan." "You are jesting, Sophia." "Never was more serious in my life. must, and I will, see Mrs. Lanigan!

So the abashed husband has to take a box,

and in due time they are waiting for the curtain to rise. "Now, which is Mrs. Lanigan?" Sophia asks, after the play has begun. "There," Percival says, "in the

"The blue satin dress? Surely THAT is not Mrs. Lanigan?" Sophia puts a very impres sive emphasis on "that." "Yes, that is she," Percival replies, with obvious awkwardness. He feels very much ashamed of having admired her. He can see

nothing in her now at all. "Mrs. Lanigan is not the woman with the long train!" Sophia says, resolved to disbelieve him. In fact, she implies that it is quite incredible that THAT can be Mrs. Lanigan. "Yes, the woman with the long train," he

"Why, Percival, you said she was so pretty." "Well, you know," Percival says, "that was "Had she the same nose in Australia?" inquires Sophia, crushing her husband by this

And hereupon Mrs. Sophia Brent sets to work and picks the renowned Lanigan to pieces, from her eyebrows to her toes, and makes it as plain as Euclid to Percival that she is not at all prepossessing; and Percival, having the woman of women at his side, believes all he hears, and begins to remember now that Mrs. Lanigan's complexion was sometimes a little doubtful. So you see, reader, that Sophia, with all her charms, was only mortal woman after all, and would let fly an arrow at a rival as swiftly as any of her sex. But it mattered nothing to Mrs. Lanigan, who was three times recalled. And it mattered nothing to Sophia, who only wanted to punish her husband, and never loved him more tenderly than that night. And so it really comes to this, that I need not have recorded so trivial an occurrence at all.

## SEQUEL.

CHAPTER I. THE CHARACTERS BEGIN TO DISAPPEAR. I am beginning to regret that I did not call this "A Circular Novel;" which, beside being a title that might have raised public curiosity immensely, would have pointed to one of the most remarkable features of the production. For the mathematical reader will know that it is the property of a circleno matter how vast it be-that if you pursue its circumference patiently you must at last reach the very point from which you start. So here, reader, have you and I been companions now for six months, and on the best of terms, trudging without a murmur the round of this novel, and now June finds us in that very dining room, with its mingling lights, from which at first we started. For the dining room was Egerton Doolittle's; and among the company were not Sophia only, but her husband, Percival Brent. And now let us ascend to the drawing room and rejoin the ladies, and with the evening our novel, too, shall close.

One ponderous figure we miss. Archibald Goldmore no longer moves in the Kettlewell society. Fifteen long years ago that leviathan paid the great debt of nature. The grand reserve which had hung around him all his life long was never, even to the last, ruffled by one fold. Responsible he was, just, good, in his own way; but Sybil never got very near to him. The pair had not a quarrel in their lives; partly because she stood in awe of him, partly because he never meddled with her. partly because each was impassive and cold. partly because they never loved each other. Love, my reader, is a grand ingredient in quarrels. The husband and wife walked apart through life, and never exchanged one cordial confidence Even when Goldmore was seized with what he felt sure was to be his mortal illness he did not communicate his foreboding to Sybil. This was not because he feared frightening her, but only from his way of keeping things to himself. Before long, however, concealment became impossible. The doctor entered the house; the end was in "Sibyl," the old man said one day, when he

was rather better than usual, "I wish to say a word to you." He drew himself up a little. with a faint remembrance in his air of his famous testimonial style. "You have been to me a loving and an honorable wife. When I die you will find that I have recognized all that. You will not be hampered by any foolish restrictions. I desire to return you my thanks"-as if he had been speaking at a public dinner-"for your unvarying consideration and attention to all my wishes."

He paused, and she stood beside him and did not speak, nor show any sign of feeling. She only regarded him fixedly; and he, after waiting to gather a little strength, added in the simplest way: "God bless you, my dear, and watch over you when I am gone.

And then, although her face moved not a whit, he saw one tear come out and stand on her eyelash and roll down her cheek. It was the only tear he had ever seen her shed. Perhaps from her it signified more than floods of weeping from an ordinary woman. It was sincere, anyhow, not assumed; and Goldmore knew it, and the sight comforted him before he died. Liberty and fortune he certainly left her; and at the time of his death Sibyl was in the

very height of matronly beauty. Her figure

was full and rounded, her hair as fresh as

when she was twenty, and her movements

full of grace and dignity. She was by no

means young; but hers was a style of beauty

which Time finds it hard to destroy, and we

all expected that she would have married

beauty she thought herself. She grew affected, sat in postures, dressed for twenty-five-we even fancy that she rouged a little. Meanwhile, her old reserve and her silent ways remained the same. She talked little, and took no pains with her conversation. She treated most people with haughty reserve. Strong and sensible as she was, Sibyl was never able to see that she was growing an old woman, and that the affectation of physical beauty had long ago been ridiculous. I grieve o write it of Sibyl, for whom I have ever felt respect, and even regard, but the verdict of Kettlewell was that she once a queen in our society-had become dreadful word!-Caroline, at the same time, had changed

with years in quite another way. You remember how well she used to dress !- all these girls dressed well. But Caroline, as she became intellectual, began to neglect her peron, and rather affected slovenliness. She would wear a morning dress in the evening. or go to a concert in a shawl like a parish blanket, which she would pin across her breast with some odd breech that she might have picked up in Hanway street. In fact, Car became fearfully blue, and would even talk about Hebrew during dinner, attacking tender young curates who had never seen a Hebrew grammar, frightening the poor young men out of their senses, and ruining a good dinner. In addition to this, she became a wonan's rights lady, and made speeches advocating female suffrage. Upon these occasions Egerton used to go to the back of the hall with an umbrella and explaud. Also, if it was a strange town, he would nudge his next neighbor when the speakers came on the

"Can you tell me," he would ask, in a low whisper, "which of these ladies is Mrs. Egerton Doolittle!" Curiously enough, the stranger was never able to point her out.

"I should like to have seen her," Egerton would say. "People assert she is a tremendously clever woman. Indeed, I know she is. In fact, you may spread it with confidence: she is a tremendously clever woman!" "And in this way, my dear," Egerton would

say to her when they got home, "in this way I intend to get your name up. It's the kind of thing that is done with actresses, and-and popular preachers, and statesmen too, I understand. Some one goes about-perhaps the man's twin brother-pretending he does not know him by sight; asks, 'Is that the great Mr. So-and-so? Probably the other says, 'I never heard of the great Mr. So-and-so.' 'How very remarkable!' the twin brother exclaims. 'Everybody is talking about him.

I so wish to see what he is like.' Exactly my way with you, dear. I shall get your name up, depend upon it." "I am afraid we shall never get our votes," Caroline remarked, resting her chin on her hand, and speaking in a mood of deleful confidence. It had been a wet evening, and the meeting had been small, moist, and not sanguine. "We are working against hope." "I should not be disheartened, Car, if I were

you," Egerton replied. "Try a little of this pheasant, dear. No! Well, I will. I was going to say I should not be disheartened about the cause. As you said to-night, dear, new truths always have to work their way. Look at my theory about red mullet. I have been at it for twenty years, and yet even to this day that delicious fish is laid on your plate in most houses in Kettlewell just as if it was a package. But that truth will work its way, too; and when I am no more"-Egerton said this with a tremor in his voice, and he laid down his knife and fork to deal with certain symptoms of moisture in his left eye-"when I am no more, red mullet will be cooked in my way all over educated Europe." For poor Egerton remained constant to his great theory about red mullet and firmly

would help on the regeneration of mankind, and in this gentle conviction our amiable milksop will live and die. We bid farewell to Sibyl, to Caroline, to Egerton. Let the men learn what lesson from Egerton they can or will. I write for the women. And I wish them to observe that Caroline, as well as Sibyl, sank into a social infliction, lost all power of attraction as years went on; and in both cases I believe the loss arose from simple mismanagement. This story (as every reflecting reader saw long ago) has as many morals as a hedgehog has prickles. But here is one par-

persuaded that a reform in that direction

ticular moral spear which I would infix in the minds of my feminine students: Either Sibyl or Caroline, according to the gifts of person and of mind, would have outshone Sophia from first to last had they known the secret of charming as she knew it.

CHAPTER II. MY SWEET SOPHIA. I daresay some of those readers who are never satisfied want to know why in the world I have not told them more about Percival Brent, our Sophia's worthy and happy husband. Now, the answer to this I shall at once supply. He was so good and worthy, and so successful and happy after his marriage, that of him there is nothing to tell. What can you say in a story about a man who goes to bed and gets up again three hundred and sixty-five times every year like all the rest of us? It is your men who either never wish to go to bed, or have no bed to go to, who make the fortunes of us novelists. Percival continued a devoted student of science all his life, and he has already attained a very respectable eminence among men of research.

I have been told that, but for his great modesty, his name would be more widely known than it is; and even now I am assured he will make a sensation beyond his own circle of thought by a new work which he has in hand. Sophia loved him well and constantly, and he never wavered in his devotion to her for an instant. His only other mistress was Science, who is a harmless dame, and never broke a wife's heart yet; for, indeed, she rather promotes matrimonial constancy. Children came to these happy two in fair succession, girls and boys-the eldest being at Cambridge when the youngest was yet toddling from chair to chair. I fancy Sophia never quite shared the enthusiasm of her lord and master for the physical sciences; and she did not quite care for all his learned professors, who had not enough humanity for her; but she always entertained them genially. At times she would fillip her husband a little. For instance, one day hearing him say of a scientific friend, "He is successful and profound," which Percival uttered with unusual deliberation, Mrs. Sophia comes to her husband's side, and, looking saucily over his shoulder, says she: "By 'successful' my husband means that the gentleman has liscovered a new beetle.

and by 'profound' that he believes absolutely nothing." Which Percival answered with a laugh

and a pinch. Beyond these harmless pleas-

antries there was never a difference on general subjects between the two. And here is why I have said nothing about Percival Brent. Happy, somebody cries, is the nation that has no history. Happy the husband, say I, about whom the novelist can find nothing to tell. Happy Percival Brent, of whom all we now record is that he called Sophia his wife; and that she was mother to the children who are now rising up like young palm trees in that happy home where once down the dining room floor our merry little mother of long ago stepped her minuet.

But Sophia, Sophia, to you I have not done justice. We all called you "Lady Beauty," but I have failed to describe you aright. You are not interesting in my pages. You are interesting in life. Who could make real your thousand little graces of mind and way, of dress and look and speech? I feel that had I drawn a woman who knew the way to administer strychnine safely, and did administer it; or had I written about a woman who had four husbands, but had never realized her ideal, and described her in a cab, or a yacht, or some other energetic conveyance, flying away to joy with the man of her heart: or had I described a lively young woman who smoked Three Castles tobacco, wore a billy-

cock hat sloped on her head, knew how to swear and whistle-she might have been a success in my hands. But you I have not been able to draw, my sweet Sophia. A blurred dim tracing is all I have given of your clear and perfect beauty. You will be called insipid; you whose hands and eyes and presence, had they but been about me, would have made me all I might have been, and now shall never be. Forgive me, who, trying to paint you, have painted only your pale shadow, and who feels now, as the brush slips through tired fingers, "I have tried, and tried and failed."

CHAPTER III. LADY BEAUTY TRACTES LADIES ALL HOW

TO BE BEAUTIFUL But with a sigh I shall not end this story I am resolved to end smiling, and to have my readers smiling, too; for which purpose I have kept an anecdote for the very latest

Sophia would sometimes see her friends at little tete-a-tete visits, and here she would discourse, as she only could, on all kinds of subjects, or she would let her friends discourse. The charm of Sophia was, that you could never tell exactly whether it was you or she kept up the conversation. How that woman managed her house and family is quite beyond my comprehension. Manage she did, and well, and yet whenever you called on her, morning or evening, there she was, dressed with the best taste, her hair done in faultless style, and all the rest of her attire to match. Ah, gray-haired Sophia, you knew-did you not!-that one to whom you often vouchsafed those gracious interviews, in all honor loved you with a more than boyish love! Of what did we not talk! Literature, music, pictures, history, gossip now and then, but somehow one always went away from that drawing room with a more cheerful heart, with nobler views and hopes of human life, with a touch of refinement

caught from Sophia. And lovers Sophia had more than me, as he shall see who reads on to the now nearing close.

One morning-well I remember it-as Sophia and myself sat thus alone, Percival being occupied with a fossil, I drew from my pocket that little paper of "Beauty Rules," of which I told you some time ago, saying that I should like her to explain these axioms to me. She was sitting in a low chair, and had work-basket beside her, with which she kept up a kind of telegraphic connection in the shape of a thread which traveled slowly from the basket to herself, as her fingers worked out some mystery in wool.

"Hand me the paper," she said, laying her needles and work down. "I will read them to you, and explain."
But here Sophia was seized with a fit of laughing, greatly tickled, it seemed, to find

herself lecturing on beauty to me. "I never showed these to any one except yourself," she remarked, when her mirth was ended. "And I never meant to show them to them great rubbish." And so she began with a comic preface,

which was not on the paper at all: "'Beauty Rules,' by Sophia Brent, an elderly lady, who ought to be thinking of "Rule One .- A woman's power in the

world is measured by her power to please. Whatever she may wish to accomplish she will best manage it by pleasing. A woman's grand social aim should be to please. done," Sophia said, putting her paper down for a moment. "A woman can please the eye by her appearance, her dress, her face and figure. She can please the ear by study-

ing the art of graceful elocution, not hard to any of us, for by nature we speak with finer articulation than you. She can please the mind by cultivating her own-so far, at least, as to make her a good listener; and as much further as she will she can please the fancy by ladies' wit, of which all of us have a share. She can please the heart by amiability. See here," she continued, growing graver, "you have the key of my system. Beauty of person is only one feature of true beauty. Run over these qualities. See how small a part personal beauty or the freshness of youth plays here. I want you to observe this; for my art would consist not in making women attractive who are openly pretty and young, but in showing them that youth and prettiness, though articles of beauty, are

neither the only nor the indispensable arti-"In that case," I remarked, "you will hardly illustrate your system in person." To this she vouchsafed a smile and mock

"Rule Two. - Modesty is the ground on which all a woman's charms appear to the best advantage. In manners, dress, conversation, remember always that modesty must never be forgotten.

"Hardly likely to be," I murmured. "Is it?" "Understand me," answered Sophia briskly, "I mean modesty in a very extended sense, There is nowadays a tendency in women to rebel against old-fashioned modesty. The doctrine of liberty is spreading among us, for which I thank God," Sophia said (she was the oddest little mixture of Tory and Whig and Radical ever compounded on this eccentric earth). "But the first effects of that doctrine on our minds are a little confusing We are growing more independent and more individual. Some of us fancy that to be modest is to be old-fashioned, and, of course, we want the newest fashions in all things. I maintain," Sophia said, growing a little warm, as if she fancied I might argue back-"I maintain that a modest woman is the reply of my sex to a brave man-you can no more have a true woman without modesty than a true man without courage. But remember, I use the

word modesty in a high sense." "Just what I was going to ask," I said. Not prudery," she added. "Prudery is to modesty what brag is to bravery. Prudery is on the surface; modesty is in the soul. Rosalind in her boy's suit is delightfully modest, but not," Sophia said with a twinkle of her eye-"not very prudish, is

I assented, and thus made way for-"Rule Three. -So the woman's aim is to please, and modesty is the first principle in the art of pleasing.

"Have you anything to say to that?" she "Not a syllable," I replied. "I play disciple this morning." 'Very well," she rejoined. "We come, "Rule Four .- Always dress up to your age or a little beyond it. Let your person

be the youngest thing about you, not the

"A very important lesson for women of forty," Sophia remarked, speaking with a seriousness which amused me. "The attempt to dress for young almost invariably leads to a reaction in the spectator's mind, and the traces of years become more palpable and more significant. But a slight and graceful assumption of years in one's dress has an effect directly opposite. May this

rule pass?"
I bowed, and she went on: "Rule Five. - Remember that what women admire in themselves is seldom what men admire in them.

"In nine drawing rooms out of ten," Sophia said, seeing me give a look of inquiry as she read this article, "Miranda or Cordelia, as novel heroines, would be voted bores. Women would say: 'We utterly decline to accept these watery girls as typical of us; we want smartness and life.' I don't really care much for Miranda or Cordelia myself. Now, this seems to me to caution us against trusting too implicitly or too far our own notions about ourselves. Another source of misunderstanding comes from the novel writers. We are the novel readers, and the novelist is forced to write heroines to suit our taste. He does not want to offend us. Thus it comes about that even the male novelist is too often only depicting women's women, after all.

And I believe scores of modern girls are seriously misled for this very reason. They believe they are finding out what men think of them, when in truth they are reading their own notions handed back to them under "Like the ap wine," I ventured to ob serve, "mas, in England, exported to a foreign country to be blessed, and then re-

turned as fine old sherry-highly finished Sophia laughed with me at this, and read "Rule Six. - Women's beauties are seldom

men's beauties. "Which," she remarked, "is another form of what I said just now, only here I speak of personal beauty. My observation is, that if ten men and ten women were to go into the same company, and each sex choose the prettiest woman there, as they thought, you would rarely find that they chose the same. If this be so, we ought not to trust ourselves even as to our faces without considering that the sex we are to please must in the end settle the question, and will settle the question

"Rule Seven .- Gayety tempered by seriousness is the happlest manner in society. "By which I mean," Sophia said, looking at me with knitted brows, as if she were about to explain some matter not altogether clear to herself, "that in all our gayety there ought to be a hint of self-recollection. Do you un-

derstand me f" "Not quite," I said "This I know certainly," she replied: "the most agreeable women I have met with-and I think the most regarded-have been women of rank, who have been trained with a due regard for religion. Their worldly education had made them mindful of grace and liveliness; their religious education kept these qualities under a particular sort of control. which is perceptibly different from mere good breeding. It seems to me that vivacity and sprightliness are greatly enhanced by a vein of seriousness. Certainly no woman

ought to be a mocker. "Next," she continued, seeing I did not speak, "comes-"Rule Eight .- Always speak low.

"I wonder why I put that down. It is so obvious. In support of it I need only quote your Shakespeare, who calls it 'an excellent hing in woman.

"Rule Nine. - A plain woman can never be pretty. She can always be fascinating if she

"I well remember." Sophia said, after reading this to me rather questionable assertion. "a man who was a great admirer of our sex telling me that one of the most fascinating woman he had ever known was not only not pretty, but as to her face decidedly plain -ugly, only the word is rude. I asked my friend: 'How, then, did she fascinate?' well remember his reply. 'Her figure,' said he, 'was neat, her dressing was faultless, her every movement was graceful, her conversation was clever and animated, and she always tried to please. It was not I alone that called her fascinating; she was one of the most acceptable women in society I ever knew. She married brilliantly and her hu band, a barrister in large practice, was de voted to her-more than if she had been a

queen of beauties." "Now here," Sophia continued, resuming her own discourse-"here was a woman who. excepting a fairly neat figure, had not a single natural gift of appearance. Is not this worth our thinking about-those of us women who care to please and are not beauties born?"

"Rule Ten.-Every year a woman lives the more pains she should take with her

"The dress of us elderly dames," Sophia said, laughing, "ought to be more of a science than it is. How often one hears a woman of fifty say, 'O, my dressing days are past! When," adds Sophia, "if she thought about it, they have only well begun. At least, the time has come when dress is more to her than ever. Remember, from forty to sixty-five is a quarter of a century-the third of a long life. It is the period through which the majority of grown-up people pass. And yet how little pains women take-how little thought beforehand-to be charming then! "And now," she went on, seeing I did not speak, "here comes my last rule—as yet:"

"Rule Eleven. - In all things let a woman ask what will please the men of sense before she asks what will please the men of fashion. "I by no means intend," she added, "that a woman is not to have regard to the opinion of men of fashion, only she should not give it the first place. She will carry the men of fashion sooner by methods that please the men of sense than men of sense by methods that please men of fashion. And besides, listen to the men of fashion. They always praise a woman for things which begin to perish at twenty-five. Even the old men of seventy will talk of 'a fine girl-deucedly fine figure!" '(I wish I could give an idea of Sophia's slightly wicked mimicry at this passage.) "And they will call a woman rather on the decline, when, if she is on the decline, where and what are they? You see, if a woman lives for the commendation of men of fashion she will, if pretty, piquant, or what not, have a reign of ten years. But if she remembers that she has charms of mind and character and taste, as well as charms of figure and complexion, the men of sense will follow her for half a century; and in the long run the men of fashion will be led

"And there," Sophia cried merrily, throw ng the paper down on the rug beside herthere are my rules for reforming our little

I praise my heroine no more-not a fine, not a word. Two little anecdotes I tell of her, and with these I leave her to your judgment, my fair readers. The first anecdote, you will perceive, is in the old style, and you will vawn over it. The second is more in our

Percival Brent was a quiet undemonstrative man of science, who never shocked anybody by declaring himself against religion, or the "old notions." But among his particular friends, it was well known that he freely accepted the most advanced and (as they are at present considered) the most disintegrating scientific views. ("Now what is this leading up to!" you, my May-blossom student, will ask: patinece, little one; look below and see how near the end we are.) One of his to him freely, said one day interrogatively: "It is a matter of astonishment to me. Brent, that you, with your opinions, still keep up your religious practices so regularly ?" "Let me tell you the reason," Brent

answered. "I am married to a wife whom I love, and admire even more than I love her. For true sweetness of character, liveliness, sense, and virtue all round, I never met her equal. I have often asked myself, 'What is the secret of her character? and I always come to the same conclusion-that if her religious faith were deducted from her she could not be what she is, but must become a less agreeable and not so good a woman. She has kept me from taking the leap which reason has often bid me take. I cannot renounce a religion which I feel makes her what she is." A tedious anecdote, reader, however short.

Now for number two, which is quite another

pattern. To Kettlewell, not so many years ago, came a man aged forty-three. He was famed as a ladies' man, and something in him must have pleased women, for his success with a certain set was quite undoubted. Perhaps his consummate impudence won their hearts. Be that as it may, he was among them an object of no little curiosity, the more because he was wealthy and presumptive heir to a title. This man, satisfied with himself and confident of his power over women, met Mrs. Sophia Brent two or three times. Whether he fancied her to be maid or widow-or whether, knowing her to be married, he meant to enshrine her in a Platonic affection I cannot tell. This I can tell. This, reader, did actually happen. That this man of the world, aged forty-

three, fell in love with Mrs. Sophia Brent, aged fifty-three, and positively made a downright fool of himself. Ladies, I am your most obedient humble THE MUTUAL BENEFIT Life Insurance Company,

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